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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/796,359	03/09/2004	John Riley Hawkins	DEP5260	2263
27777	7590	07/26/2006	EXAMINER	
PHILIP S. JOHNSON JOHNSON & JOHNSON ONE JOHNSON & JOHNSON PLAZA NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08933-7003				RAMANA, ANURADHA
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3733		

DATE MAILED: 07/26/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/796,359	HAWKINS ET AL.
	Examiner Anu Ramana	Art Unit 3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 May 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-33 and 35-58 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-27 and 50-58 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 28-33,35-43 and 47-49 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 44-46 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 09 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/9/04; 12/19/05.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of the invention of Group I (claims 1-49 and 51-58) and species IV (Figs. 5A-5D) in the reply filed on May 3, 2006 is acknowledged. Claims 28-33 and 35-49 have been examined on the merits in this office action since they read on the elected species. It appears that number 34 has been skipped while numbering claims.

Claim Objections

Claims 35-58 are objected to because of the following informalities. The numbering of the claims is improper since 34 appears to have been skipped while numbering the claims. Original numbering has been retained in the rejections below to avoid confusion.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 31-33 and 35-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 31, the "means for connecting" includes first and second openings. It is unclear whether the recited "first opening" is different from the first opening already recited in claim 28.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 28-33, 35 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zucherman et al. (US 6,332,882).

Zucherman et al. disclose an interspinous implant having a central body 1016 with upper and lower surfaces, first and second side surfaces, an opening extending from a first side surface into the body, a first extension 1004 and a second extension 1032 (Figs. 92a and 92b, col. 21, lines 13-67 and col. 22, lines 1-5).

Claims 28-33, 36 and 38-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zucherman et al. (US 6,695,842).

Zucherman et al. disclose an interspinous implant 100 having a spacer or central body 102, a first wing or extension 104 and a second wing or extension 110 wherein the inner surface of an extension has a convex contour and the anterior surface of an extension has a concave contour (Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 32-67 and col. 4, lines 1-47).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 43, 47 and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zucherman et al. (US 6,332,882) in view of Davison (US 6,530,926).

Zucherman et al. disclose all elements of the claimed invention except for a rivet.

Davison teaches the equivalence of rivets and bolts as fasteners (col. 8, lines 53-65).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to substitute a rivet as, for example, taught by the Davison reference for the bolt of the Zucherman et al. device wherein so doing would amount to mere substitution of one functionally equivalent structure for another within the same art and the selection of any of these fasteners would work equally well in the Zucherman et al. device.

Claim 49 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zucherman et al. (US 6,695,842).

Zucherman et al. disclose that all components of implant 100 are made of a biologically acceptable material such as high strength titanium alloy (col. 3, lines 6-8). Zucherman et al. also disclose that spacer or central body 102 could be made of a rigid or resilient material such as silicone as desired (col. 3, lines 32-35).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have constructed the central body of the Zucherman et al. device of a resilient material such as silicone and the wings of a material having a greater stiffness than silicone, such as titanium, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 44-46 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anu Ramana whose telephone number is (571) 272-4718. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

AR 
July 20, 2006